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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310



IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-F (M) (16 Apr 68) FOR OT RD 67X196

24 April 1968

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - Operation KIEN GIANG 1-9, 3d
Brigade, 9th Infantry Division, Period 15-19 November 1967 (U)

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

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Kenneth G. Wickham

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Major General, USA
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HEADQUARTERS 3D BRIGADE
9TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO US FORCES 96373

AVDE-BCO

30 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32) (u)

TO: Commander
US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
ATTN: J343
APO 96234

1. (u) Name of Operation: Kien Giang 9-1

2. (u) Dates of Operation: 151210-191915H Nov 67.

3. (C) Location: Base area 470 and specifically areas bounded by
XS090495, XS043540, XS043643, XS110643, XS106553, and XS131514.

4. (u) Command Headquarters: 3d Bde 9th Inf Div.

5. (C) Reporting Officer:

a. Colonel George W. Everett, Commanding Officer 3d Brigade,
9th Infantry Division.

b. Lieutenant Col William S. Hinton Commanding Officer 2d Bn
60th Inf, 3d Brigade.

c. Lieutenant Col William B Steele Commanding Officer 5th
Bn (M) 60th Inf, 3d Brigade.

d. Lieutenant Colonel George Eland, Commanding Officer 3d
Bn 47th Inf, 2d Brigade.

6. (C) Task Organization:

2-60 Inf:	3-47 Inf:
2d Bn, 60th Inf (-)	3d Bn, 47th Inf
B Co, 3-39 Inf	
C Btry 2-4 Arty DS	
Plat C Co 15 Engr Bn (DS)	
TM, 9th ML Det (SPT)	
5-60 Inf:	Bde Con
5th Bn (M) 60th Inf	2-4 Arty DS
B Btry, 2-4 Arty (DS)	C Co 15th Engr (-) (DS)
Plat, C Co 15 Engr Bn (DS)	3d Plat 9th MP Co (-)
	3d Plat Co 3 9th Sig Bn (-)
	Bde Con
	Co D, 709th Maint Bn (SPT)
	Co C, 9th Med Bn (SPT)
	TM 9th ML Det (SPT)
	6th AA Plat, 2d OA Co (SPT)

7. (C) Supporting Forces:

a. 11 Field Forces Army Aviation Units

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b. 7th USAF

c. 1st Log Cmd

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8.(C) Intelligence:

9.(C) Mission: The 3d Bde conducted airmobile assaults, search and destroy operations, saturation patrols, and established blocks within base area 470 to destroy VC forces, their supporting elements and base installations.

10.(C) Concept of Operation:

a. Phase I (15 Nov 67): The 3d Bde "Go Devils" displaced to staging area at Dong Tam, RVN, with the Bde CP moving by motor convoy from Tan An at 1350H and arriving at Dong Tam at 1510H. 2-60 Inf was moved by helicopter from Tan Tru at 1234H and closed Dong Tam at 1550H. 5-60 (A) Inf was moved by helicopter from Vinh Phuc at 1210H and closed Dong Tam at 1330H. 3 Btry 2-4 Arty was moved by helicopter from Tan Tru at 1530H and closed Dong Tam at 1630H. D Btry 2-4 Arty was moved by helicopter from Tan An at 1400H and closed Dong Tam at 1430H.

b. Phase II (16 Nov 67): 3-47 Inf (Tigers) conducted Co sized airmobile assaults and search and destroy operations vic XS0345. A Co was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 1 lift at 0800H and inserted on LZ Blue XS0645525 at 0831H. The Co maneuvered to the south and secured FS/PB Cuigel XS035520 at 0915H without incident. B Co was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 1 lift at 0813H and inserted on LZ Blue at 0835H. The Co maneuvered north along the Tra Lec River sweeping obj 9 A XS076525 and 9 XS073553 without contact or incident. The Co established its flag vic XS073535 and conducted two platoons size night ambush patrols in the vic of obj 9. C Co was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 1 lift at 0838H and inserted on LZ Blue at 0833H. The Co maneuvered to the south and east sweeping obj's 50 XS-090510, 50A XS098517 and 5 XS110524 without contact. The Co established its flag vic XS108526 and conducted 1 platoon size night combat patrol at 2350H vic XS114514. The combat patrol (21 Plat) engaged and killed 3 VC (1C) moving north in a sampan on the Su Tra Canal. C Btry 2-4 Arty was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam at 0945H and inserted on FS/Ps Cuigel at 0950H. The battery was ready to fire at 0920H. D Btry 2-4 Arty was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam at 1100H and inserted on FS/Ps Cuigel at 1530H. The Btry was ready to fire at 1616H. 2-60 Inf conducted platoons and Co size airmobile assaults and search and destroy ops vic XS0760. A Co was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 2 lifts at 1000H and inserted on LZ Green XS066593. The Co maneuvered northwest and north along both sides of the Tra Lec River sweeping through obj 20 XS065595. At 1105H vic XS063595 the Co captured 1 VC armed with 2 chicken hand grenades. The element continued its sweep without further incident and established a block oriented to the east vic XS062617. A Co (3-59) and recon platoons were moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 2 lifts at 1009H and inserted on LZ Black XS062609 at 1035H. The elements maneuvered north and east sweeping FS/Ps Mace XS065613 and the southern side of the Tong Toc Lec Canal. At 1140H vic XS067616, the elements established contact with an est VC Co resulting in 2 US MA, 4 US MA, and 4 K-16's and 1 F-AC 25 mil. missing. The Co established its flag on FS/Ps Mace. C Co was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 4 lifts at 1115H and inserted on LZ Black at 1300H. The Co maneuvered north and secured FS/Ps Mace at 1315H without incident. The Co conducted 2 reinforced squad size ambush patrols and established its flag on FS/Ps Mace. Recon platoons returned to FS/Ps Mace with B Co at 1610H and established its flag. B Btry 2-4 Arty was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam at 1145H and inserted on FS/Ps Mace at 1235H. The Btry was prepared to fire at 1300H. At 2215H the FS/Ps Mace came under enemy mortar and ground attack. The enemy launched a two-pronged attack from the east and west utilizing an est 2 VC Co's as attacking forces. Fire was returned with organic wps, arty, gunships, tactical air, and a Specky. Contact was broken at 2245H resulting in 6 US being MA and 13 K-16's being destroyed. 5-60 (M) Inf conducted platoons and Co size airmobile assaults and S&D wps vic XS08358. B Co was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 1 lift at 1106H and inserted vic XS082617 at 1135H. The Co maneuvered south and at 1220H vic XS080616, the Co established contact with an est 2 VC Co's. The Co remained in contact varying from light to heavy until 1830H and sustained 2 MA and 15 MA and lost an est (account not confirmed) 3 K-16's, 2 M-79's and 1 .45 cal pistol. VC losses

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were 6 VC KIA (BC) and 3 probable as verified by soldiers in combat. Recon platoon was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 1 lift at 1508H and inserted via XS082617 at 1529H. The platoon reinforced C Co in its defense position via XS082618 and provided security for a chopper that was downed due to an engine failure at 1235H. C Co was moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 1 lift at 1101H and inserted on LZ Brown XS094612 at 1130H. Immediately upon landing, the Co established contact with an est VC platoon via XS094616. The Co remained in contact varying from light to heavy until 1815H and sustained 7 MA. Enemy losses were 20 VC KIA (probable as verified by soldiers in contact). The Co established a blocking position oriented to the west via XS095598. A Co and recon platoon were moved by helicopter (CH-47) from Dong Tam at 1245H to via LZ Brown. At 1308H while attempting to land one of the CH-47's received 7 hits from SA fire which wounded 2 crew members. The insertion was aborted and the helicopters returned to Dong Tam. At 1503H A Co was once again moved by helicopter from Dong Tam in 1 lift and inserted via XS100614 at 1537H. The Co maneuvered to the west along the northern side of the Teng Doc Loc Canal sweeping through obj 41 XS099614 without incident and established a blocking position oriented to the west via XS095613. The Bde and CP departed Dong Tam by convoy at 0805H and established its CP via XS228504 at 0947H. The Grip provided security to the fwd CP without incident. The G Devils had 23 supporting airstrikes resulting in: 15 VC KBA (confirmed), 26 bunkers, 2 structures and 6 NV positions being destroyed, 2 secondary explosions and 5 sustained fires. ARVN ops: at 0700H the 3-11 ARVN was lifted by helicopter from PZ 20 XS076450 and inserted on LZ Alice AS135602 and LZ Barbara XS117593 at 0745H. Once inserted they proceeded to sweep SA along both sides of the Ninh So Loc Canal through objs 44 XS125602, 45 XS120591, 46 XS135539, 47 AS139557, and 48 XS145567. The day's ops resulted in neg contact and the element set up in night location at 1700H via obj 48. At 0800 the 2-11 was lifted by helicopter from PZ 20 XS076450 into LZ Delores XS123584 and LZ Dora XS116570 at 0845H. They swept SE along both sides of the Rach Cao Gao through obj 18 XS117577, 19 XS123570, 20 XS11562, 21 XS128556 and 22 XS145550. At 1000 via obj 18 the 2-11 captured the deputy security chief of the local base area who led them to 1 chicom rifle, 75 booby traps, plus numerous documents. They continued to sweep without incident and established night location via obj 21. At 0900H the third element of TF 11 (1-12) was lifted by helicopter from PZ 20 XS076450 into LZ Elle XS150603 and Flora XS137595. The 1-12 after insertion swept south SE along both sides of the Rach Ca Ngan through check points 77 XS202552, and 76 XS188555 to the junction of the Rach Bang Day. Ops resulted in capture of 1 chicom carbine near obj 72 at 1300 and capture of 1 VC POW and 1 VC MA on checkpoint 10 at 1230H. The elements established their night locations on checkpoint 12 and near obj 69.

(1) US LOSSES:

(a) Personnel: 3 KIA, 42 MA and 2 MA.

(b) Equipment: Destroyed/missing 2 .45 cal pistols, 22 M-16 rifles, 2 M-79's and 1 PRC 25 radio.

(2) ARVN LOSSES: None.

(3) ENEMY LOSSES:

(a) Personnel: US-8 VC KIA (BC) 15 KIA (VC) (confirmed) 1 PW ARVN - 1 PW, 1 VC MA and 8 VC KIA (BC).

(b) Equipment Captured: US-None ARVN 2 chicom carbines 75 booby traps and numerous documents.

(c) Equipment Destroyed: US 1 sampan, 26 bunkers, 2 structures and 6 NV positions.

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c. Phase III (17 Nov 67): The 3d Devils conducted plat and Co size airmobile assaults and S&D ops in A0 Bravo XS0858. 3-47 Inf (Tigers) conducted Co size airmobile assaults and S&D ops vic XS0654. At 0410H, vic XS114514, an ambush patrol from Co C (3d plat) engaged and sank 4 sampans resulting in 7 VC KIA (1C). The Co was moved by helicopter from FS/PB Cuigol XS085520 in 2 lifts at 1147H and inserted on obj 16 XS063555 at 1214H. The Co established a block oriented to the south while B Co maneuvered. B Co moved from its night location on obj 9 XS075535 and conducted S&D ops on obj 10 XS065546 and obj 16 maneuvering to the north against Co's block. Both elements completed their sweeps without incident and were extracted in 4 lifts at 1442H and closed FS/PB Cuigol at 1512H. C Co moved from its night location on obj 8 XS109525 and maneuvered north along the So Tom Canal sweeping obj's 30 XS105534 and 12 XS100540. The elements completed its sweep without incident and was extracted in 2 lifts at 1439H and closed FS/PB Cuigol at 1459H. The Br was extracted from FS/PB Cuigol in 6 lifts at 1503H and closed Dong Tram at 1715H. Opcon of the Br was released to 3d Bde, immediately upon closing.

2-60 Inf conducted plat and Co size airmobile assaults and S&D ops vic XS0750. A Co conducted S&D ops from its night location on the northern side of the Tong Doc Loc Canal maneuvering to the east toward A Co 5-60. At 1010H VC XS063609 the Co apprehended 2 mine performers (1 sgt A1 w/ld, 1 35 w/ID), and destroyed 12 sqd size bunkers (2X10x5), 20-20L1 sticky traps and 2 grenade body traps. The element continued its sweep without further incident and was extracted by P-11 helicopter FS/PB Arco XS065613 at 1245H. B Co (3-39) swept the area around A Co's block and at 1152H vic XS069613 recovered the bodies of the two mine's (16 Nov 67) and the 4 M-16's and 1 PRC 25 radio that had also been carried as missing. The element completed its sweep without further incident and moved by float to obj 20 XS061595. A sweep of the area ended with contact and the Co was extracted at 1655H in 2 lifts and inserted on obj 21 XS073779 at 1703H. A sweep of the obj revealed nothing and the element was extracted in 2 lifts at 1750H closing the FS/PB Mine at 1800H. At 2300H the company rec'd 3 rds of N-79 fire resulting in 3 US WIA's. At 0300H vic XS096613, C Co sustained 1 Tk evacuated from SI fire. C Co moved from its night location and swept south of the Tong Doc Loc Canal maneuvering to the east against C Co 5-60. The element completed its sweep of the area without incident and was extracted in 2 lifts at 1305H and inserted on obj 22 XS099579 at 1330H. The elements was extracted after sweeping the area with negative results at 1607H and inserted on obj 21 XS073580 at 1625H. Once again a sweep of the area was conducted without incident and the Co established its flag vic XS069581 and prepared for night ops. Recon plat moved on foot from FS/PB Mine and swept obj 52 XS049616 without incident. The plat was extracted at 1327H and inserted vic XS073612 at 1330H to prove security for two choppers that were downed by engine failure. The choppers were extracted at 1525H and 1700H respectively. Recon plat was extracted by air at 1715H and closed FS/PB Mine at 1710H. At 2300H the plat sustained 2 WIA's from an enemy M-79 round. 5-60 conducted plat and Co size airmobile assaults and S&D ops vic XS0858. A Co moved from its night location and swept the northern side of the Tong Doc Loc Canal maneuvering to the west toward A Co 2-60. At 0827H, vic XS084617 the Co destroyed 38 2-man bunkers (4X5X4). The element completed its sweep without further incident and was extracted in 2 lifts at 1150H and inserted on obj 15 XS093523 at 1214H. Search of the area revealed nothing and the Co was extracted in 2 lifts at 1540H and inserted on obj 9 XS075535 at 1646H. A sweep of the area was conducted without incident and the Co established its flag vic XS070540 and prepared for night activities. B Co and Recon plat swept from their night locations vic obj 41 XS093614 south to the Tong Doc Loc Canal then east without incident. B Co was extracted in 2 lifts at 1215H and inserted on obj 18 XS080598 at 1238H. At 1320H the CP destroyed 20 tons of rice vic XS081600. The element completed its sweep without further incident and was extracted in 2 lifts at 1620H and inserted on obj 14 XS098565 at 1626H. A sweep of the area revealed nothing and the Co was extracted in 2 lifts at 1712H and inserted on obj 8 XS109525 at 1740H. Immediately upon landing the element engaged 2-3 VC resulting in 1 VC KIA (1C), 1 US WIA. The sweep was continued without further incident and the Co established its flag vic XS109521 and prepared for night ops, recon plat was extracted at 1239H and inserted on obj 17 XS079566 at 1245H. A sweep of the area revealed nothing and the plat was extracted at 1432H and closed FS/PB Cuigol at 1440H. C Co moved from its night location and swept along the south side

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of the Tong Doc Le Canal maneuvering to the west toward C Co 2-60 without incident. The Co was extracted in 2 lifts at 1335H and closed FS/PB XS065520 at 1430H. The Grip continued to provide security for the Bde fwd CP via XS223503 without incident. The Co Devils had 6 supporting airstrikes resulting in 10 bunkers being destroyed.

(1) US LOSSES:

(a) Personnel: 5 WIA.

(b) Equipment Destroyed/Damaging: None.

(2) ARVN LOSSES: None.

(3) ENEMY LOSSES:

(a) Personnel: US: 8 VC KIA (DC) ARVN: 3 EM, 6 Detainees.

(b) Equipment Destroyed: 48 Bunkers, 20 tons of rice, 20 20MM booby traps, and 2 grenade booby traps - 4 sumpans, ARVN: None.

(c) Equipment Captured: US - None, ARVN - 1 M-47, and medical supplies.

d. Phase IV (18 Nov 67): The Co Devils conducted platoon and Co size airmobile assaults and S&D ops via XS0760. 2-60 Inf: At 0225H the Bn FS/PB Mac Le XS065613 came under an enemy mortar attack. A total of 50-75 82MM mortar rds were fired resulting in 1 US being wounded (not evacuated). The 2d platoon of A Co conducted a Recon patrol to the east and south of FS/PB Mac Le. Patrol routes were traversed without incident or contact and the platoon closed FS/PB Mac Le at 1200H. The 2d platoon of B Co was moved by helicopter from FS/PB Mac Le in 2 lifts at 1212H and inserted on obj 1 XS064643 at 1225H. A sweep of the area revealed nothing and the platoon was extracted at 1440H and closed FS/PB Mac Le at 1447H. The 1st platoon of C Co moved overland from its night location on obj 21 XS073579, and established a block on obj 22 XS055579 oriented to the west. The remaining two platoons moved overland to obj 20 XS061595 where they also established a block oriented to the west. The Co was extracted from its blocking posn in 3 lifts at 1134H and inserted on obj 52 XS051616 at 1205H without incident. Once again a blocking posn was established oriented to the west. At 1230H via XS052614, the Co sustained 3 WIA's (1 evac) from a grenade booby trap. The Co conducted its block without further incident and established its flag via XS052614 and prepared for night activities. The 1st platoon moved overland from FS/PB Mac Le and established a block on obj 52 oriented to the west. The platoon conducted its block without contact and was extracted at 1131H and closed FS/PB Mac Le at 1140H. In addition to its earlier mission, the platoon conducted a Recon patrol west and south of FS/PB Mac Le. Patrol routes were traversed without incident and the platoon closed FS/PB Mac Le at 1630H. 5-60 conducted Co size combat patrols and S&D ops via XS0753. At 0200H, FS/PB Cudgel XS065520 came under an enemy mortar, recoilless rifle and ground attack. Fire was returned with organic wpsns, arty (firing both Hh and backh rls), tactical air, army gunships and spoopy. A Co moved from its night location on obj 9 XS075535 and conducted a Co size combat patrol and sweep of the battle area. The Co maneuvered south sweeping both sides of the Tru Loc Creek. The element linked up with Recon platoon at 0630H and assisted that platoon in its reorganization and consolidation of its posn, and reestablished recon's posn on the western side of Tru Loc Creek. The Co closed FS/PB Cudgel at 0945H and without incident. B Co moved from its night location on obj 3 XS109525 and conducted a Co size combat patrol and a sweep of the battle area. The Co maneuvered west sweeping both sides of the Co Chieu Creek then swept north to FS/PB Cudgel. Patrol routes were traversed without incident and the Co closed FS/PB Cudgel, and conducted a sweep of the battle area and discovered 5 VC KIA (DC). The Co closed FS/PB Cudgel at 1427H without further incident. Results of the attack were 7 US KIA, 5 VC KIA (DC), 78 VC KIA (probable as verified by soldiers in combat), 80 VC KIA (possible), 2 US M101 howitzers damaged, 1 starlight scope, 4 M60 MG's, 1 90MM RR, 32 M-16's, 2 M-79's and 3 .45 cal pistols. The Grip continued the defense of the Bde fwd CP via XS223503 without incident. The Co Devils had 4 supporting airstrikes resulting in 3 bunkers being destroyed. ARVN ops: The 2-11 swept east from

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checkpoint 31 to obj 36 A 142300. Then south to obj 37 15142516. From there they were lifted from their PZ at 1530H and inserted into LZ 'Winston' 15232414 at 1555H. They then proceeded to Cai Lay where they were to remain as a reserve force. At 0700H, the 3-11 moved S to checkpoint 1 1511175627 and were also inserted to LZ 'Winston' at 1605H where they proceeded to Cai Lay as a reserve unit. The 4 CIDG Cpl's were extracted from their PZ at checkpoint 10 and closed their base camp having finished their phase of the opns.

(1) US LOSSES:

(a) Personnel: 7 KIA, 7 WIA.

(b) Equipment Destroyed/Unaccounted for: 2 M101 Howitzers damaged, 2 Starlight Scopes, 4 M60 W's, 1 90mm RR, 32 M16's, 2 M79's, and 3 .45 cal pistols.

(2) ARVN LOSSES: None

(3) NVN LOSSES:

(a) Personnel: 5 VC KIA (PO), 73 VC WIA (probable) and 80 VC KIA (possible).

(b) Equipment Destroyed: 50-75 mm 82mm mortar, 1 grenade booby trap, and 3 bunkers.

e. Phase V (19 Nov 67): The 3d Bn 50 Devils concluded Opn Kien Giang and extracted by helicopter initially from field locations to Dong Tam and the site of their respective base camp. The 2d Bn 50 Inf was moved from Cai Lay to a sector 6 miles away at 1700H and closed Tan An at 1915H. 2-60 Inf was moved by helicopter from FS/PB 1400 at 0730H and closed Tan Tru at 1500H. 5-60 Inf was moved by helicopter from FS/PB 1400 at 0730H and closed Linh Phuoc at 1915H. B Btry 2-4 Artillery was moved by helicopter from FS/PB 1400 at 1215H and closed Linh Phuoc at 1315H. C Btry 2-4 Artillery was moved by helicopter from FS/PB Cu Giai at 1315H and closed Tan Tru at 1630H. D Btry 2-4 Artillery was moved by helicopter from FS/PB Cu Giai at 191345H and closed Tan An at 201530H.

(1) US LOSSES:

(a) Personnel: 12 KIA, 132 WIA.

(b) Equipment Destroyed/Unaccounted for: 1 Starlight Scope, 5 .45 cal pistols, 4 70's, 50 16's (rifles), 1 M60 W's, 1 90mm RR, and 2 M101 Howitzers.

(2) ARVN LOSSES: None.

(3) NVN LOSSES:

(a) Personnel: US: 21 VC KIA (PO), 15 VC WIA (confirmed), 128 VC KIA (probable as verified by soldiers in contact), 30 VC KIA (possible), 1 PW; ARVN: 8 VC KIA (PO), 4 PW's, and 6 detainees.

(b) Equipment Destroyed: US: 76 bunkers, 2 huts, 23 booby traps, 50-75 82mm mortars, 5 sappers, 6 A1 pens and 20 tons of rice; ARVN: 75 booby traps.

(c) Equipment Captured: US: None; ARVN: 3 S1's, 4 lbs of medical supplies, and 10 lbs of documents.

11. (C) Lessons Learned:

a. Operations:

(1) Defensive Considerations:

(a) Item: Day and night combat patrols must be used to clear the area around defensive positions.

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(b) Discussion: Such close in patrols will limit the enemy's ability to observe friendly units defensive posture and will prevent the enemy from staying close to the perimeter. In addition to combat patrols, carefully planned and executed defensive fires provide an excellent means of dissuading the VC from conducting close in reconnaissance of defensive positions.

(2) Counterattack:

(a) Item: An aggressive counterattack plan with maximum use of supporting fires must be developed to prevent the enemy from policing the battlefield or recuperating his losses.

(b) Discussion: The enemy often after a vigorous and sustained attack will disengage by suddenly ceasing fire. If the friendly units also stop firing, the VC will use the lull in the battle to his advantage to (1) kill friendly wounded, (2) capture equipment and (3) recover his dead, wounded and equipment. This tactic can be stopped by a strong and vigorous counterattack. If the unit has been hit extremely hard a counterattack may not be practical, however, the cost to the enemy of policing the battlefield can be raised by sporadic firing of long range automatic weapons, artillery, AT fires, and armed helicopters on the battlefield to obtain maximum enemy casualties.

(3) Maintaining Contact:

(a) Item: Once contact has been established, pressure on the enemy must be maintained to keep him off balance.

(b) Discussion: The VC are experts in the use of delaying tactics. The situation must be developed rapidly or else the enemy will withdraw leaving a few well placed weapons behind to slow the advance of friendly units. An entrenched enemy is obviously at an advantage over friendly forces maneuvering through open terrain. The enemy can be defeated at his own game, by occupying a defensive position he has given allied forces an opportunity to bring massive supporting fires to bear. Careful consideration must be given to match the fire support available to the target. By employing artillery at the earliest opportunity on the suspected enemy location and likely avenues of escape, friendly units will be able to achieve fire superiority and prevent enemy infiltration. Light fire teams have proven invaluable when flying assault reconnaissance over open areas and likely routes of withdrawal. Smoke, CS or a combination of the two, should be intermixed with the artillery and tactical air preparations on and around the enemy's position to provide maximum cover for maneuver forces. Once fire superiority has been achieved all routes of withdrawal have been cut off friendly forces can continue their maneuver. Although maximum use of daylight is paramount the commander must not let the attack falter when darkness approaches. Units have a tendency to attempt to box the enemy in once darkness has fallen and continue the battle the next day. Although perhaps thought sound in theory, this approach seldom if ever works. Consequently, the commander must continue to press the enemy through the night using artificial light to illuminate the battle area.

(4) Air Fire Plan:

(a) Item: The success or failure of the air fire plan is determined by the amount of detailed planning given to that plan.

(b) Discussion: Bde/Bn S-3 air's must be familiar with (1) type and effects of ordnance, (2) target areas for airstrikes and (3) alternate target areas for airstrikes. Preplanned airstrikes are desirable from the standpoint of efficient utilization, since ordnance can be precisely matched to the target and the mission can be integrated into the operations plan to insure timely accomplishment and lack of interference. The use of numerous preplanned airstrikes does not create problems if (1) the FAC's are briefed on the scheme of maneuver and are assigned specific targets prior to take-off, (2) ground units are prepared to brief the FAC and mark their position, and (3) the AF and FSC have coordinated use of air, artillery, and armed gunships.

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(5) Artillery Support:

(a) Item: Use of artillery by maneuver units.

(b) Discussion: Friendly units moving toward an objective should employ marching fires and actively recon by fire. This will clear the way for the advancing unit and will provide immediate fire power if a contact develops. Once contact is established, supporting fires should not be lifted. If airstrikes are desired, arty and armor helicopter fires can be shifted to routes of withdrawal, or to the flanks or rear of the enemy. Careful planning by the FSO will enable tactical air to drop their ordnance only seconds after the arty has shifted their fires to likely VC escape routes. The FSO must notify the FSO when the fighters have expended nearly all their ordnance so when the fighters have made their last pass the arty can be shifted back onto the target.

(6) Movement in Irrigated Areas:

(a) Item: Movement in irrigated areas is hindered due to the ankle to chest deep water, charted and uncharted streams and canals that are prevalent in the area.

(b) Discussion: Means of countering this disadvantage is landing elements as close to objective areas as possible and by having the troops carry only those items of equipment that are necessary for the accomplishment of the mission.

b. Signal:

(1) During the first 4 or 5 hours the commander controlled the operation from a C&C ship until the brigade fwd CP was established. The Brigade CP was mobile and did monitor all Brigade radio nets on the forward location. During the operation the following radio stations were operated at the Brigade CP's.

(a) Division Command - FM.

(b) Division Command - FM (Secure).

(c) Division Operations and Intelligence - FM (Secure R+T).

(d) Brigade Command Net - FM.

(e) Brigade Command Net - FM (Secure) only to Brigade rear and Battalion rear bases.

(f) Brigade Admin and Log Net - FM.

(g) Brigade Admin Net - FM (Secure R+T) only to Brigade rear and Battalion rear bases.

(2) Operations:

(a) VHF Team - Equipment operated by personnel of 3d Platoon "B" Company, 9th Signal Battalion gave the Brigade access to reliable R.C switch board, Relentless rear, and hot line to Division TOC, and 2nd Brigade TOC.

(b) Message Center Section - The Brigade Message Center provided scheduled air messenger service only to Battalions and Brigade log base. Secure R/T was available to pass traffic to higher headquarters.

(c) Switch Board and Wire Section - The Brigade switch-board consisted of one SB-22, providing eight (8) local telephone circuits and three (3) trunk circuits. An average of over 400 calls were made per 24 hour period. Only internal wire communications were established.

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(d) FM Radio Section - The primary means of communications with subordinate units was FM radio. The Brigade Command Net (FM) was used to pass all traffic the first 12 hours of the operation but after a considerable amount of staff coordination and the use of the Brigade Admin and Log Net the amount of traffic passed over the command net was reduced tremendously. An automatic retransmission station for the Bde Admin and Log Net was located with the Bde fwd CP to relay for any unit having difficulty transmitting to the Bde Log Base.

(e) Maintenance Section - 2nd echelon maintenance was available to the communication platoon at the Bde FWD CP. One radio RT524 and one T-195 radio had to be evacuated to 3d echelon maintenance shop.

(3) Recommendations:

(a) Radios in C&C ship should be checked out 12 hours prior to reporting to requesting unit. This is necessary to allow any technical problems to be taken care of prior to the operation.

(b) Alternate location for retransmission station should be planned for all operations. This will allow the Brigade retransmission station more flexibility in support of other Brigade radio nets.

(c) Reverse SOI's must go forward with Brigade or Battalion CP. The availability of aircraft and the conditions that can prevent aircraft from flying could cause a long delay in getting the reverse SOI flown into a fwd CP when needed.

(d) All (NCS) net control stations and radio retransmission stations must use the antenna AT-292 when operating in a stationary position for long periods. (2 or more hours)

(e) The Brigade DS Company (maintenance) should have a signal maintenance team at the Bde Log Base with a capability of direct exchanging major signal items, such as: RT-524, RT-504, TT-76, TT-4, and T-195. On many occasions if these items cannot be repaired within a period of 4-5 hours it can effect the mission of the unit. Furthermore, if this team is co-located at the Bde Log Base, inoperative signal equipment could be evacuated and returned in a much shorter period because of the continuous resupply ships going in and out of the log base.

(f) The Bde S-1 should be issued a radio to operate in the Bde Admin and Log Net. This radio could be taken from the S-5 section. This radio AN/VRC-53 can be better utilized if assigned to the Bde S-1 section.

(g) Four AN/PNC-25 radio's should be kept in the S-3 section to act as back-up equipment for radios in C&C ship. Then if the C&C ship becomes inoperative any other HU-1D helicopter can be used as a C&C ship for the command group.

a. Psyops:

(1) The Psyops Audio - Visual Team, with its organic audio equipment displaced to the Tactical Command Post to undertake supervision of the Psyops support and to react to situations which could be successfully exploited on an immediate basis. During the operation, the team was employed in force-to-force Psyops using both projection equipment, loudspeakers and hand-disseminated leaflets. One situation presented itself which could have been exploited immediately with a limited degree of success. This was not accomplished because of a lack of photographic equipment in the field. Such equipment is organic to the infantry battalion, in the form of a Polaroid-Land camera, but is not organic to the Infantry Brigade or supporting audio-visual team.

(2) Recommendations:

(a) Battalions should habitually carry into operational areas the Polaroid-Land camera, for use in immediate reaction situations.

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(b) Security should be planned in advance so that the audiovisual unit is able to enter insecure areas to ply its trade. In the tactical environment, use of this team in a secure village on a recurring basis provides only limited advantage. Far greater benefits are to be derived from operations in an insecure or contested area, both by the message delivery and by the physical presence of GVN/FN/AF personnel. To the greatest extent possible, the security element should be Vietnamese.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

LESLIE E. RUTLEDGE JR.
MAJOR, INFANTRY
ADJUTANT

Inclosures:
1-Overlay of Area of Operation

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YR
INTERVALS DECLASSIF-
IED AFTER 12 YRS
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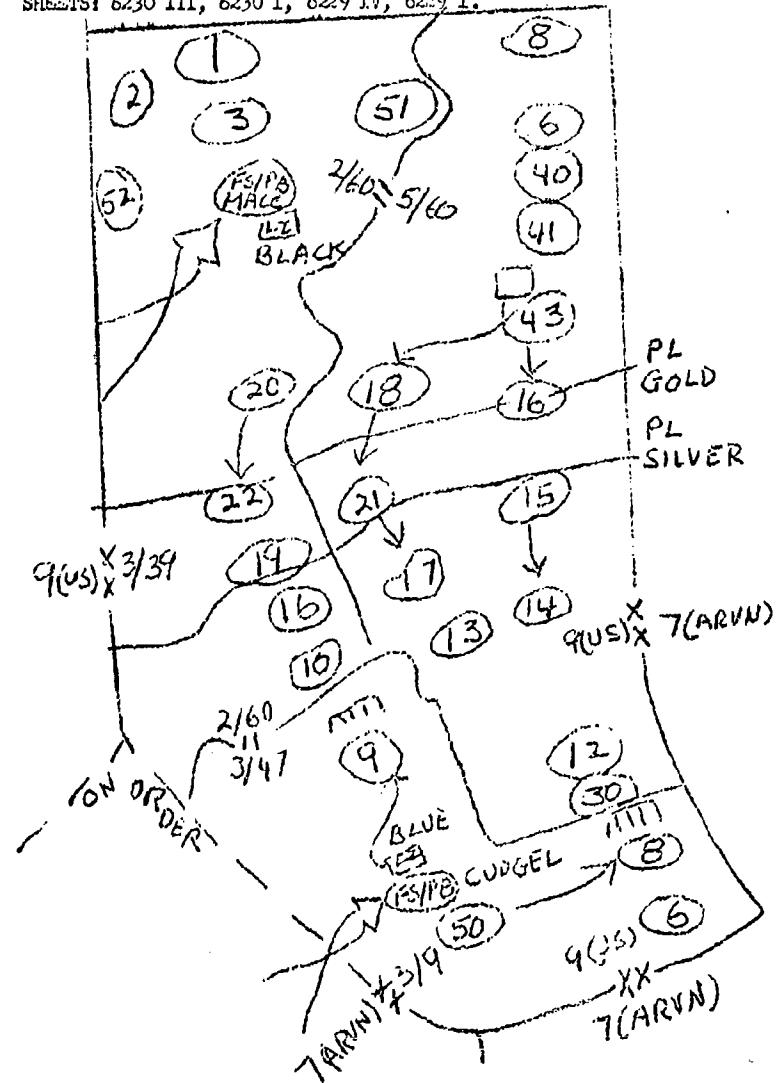
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Inclosure 1

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